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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FIELD MEMORANDUM NO. SCS #1152

Re: Student Trainee Program

October 2, 1952

TO ALL RANKING FIELD OFFICERS:

Objective

To provide an effective method of selecting and developing college students for professional careers in the Soil Conservation Service.

Policy

To carry out the objective of the Student Trainee Program, the following policy will be adhered to as a Service-wide standard:

1. Planned Recruitment: Each year sufficient trainees will be selected to create a pool from which to fill vacancies in the professional field when they have completed the training period.
2. Financing: Adequate funds will be allotted to provide continuation and stability of the program.
3. Relationships: The Service will work with the colleges in developing the Student Trainee Program to meet the needs of the Service. This work should be done on a cooperative basis and should be of mutual benefit to the Service, college and student.
4. Training: The training provided by the Service should be planned to develop the skills of the trainees and, as near as possible, utilize these skills on productive jobs.
5. Evaluation: The progress of all trainees will be evaluated as to their potential for satisfactory career employment. Adequate progress reports will be maintained.
6. Review: The Service will periodically evaluate the total Student Trainee Program.

TRAINING PLAN
FOR
STUDENT TRAINEES

Objective

To develop the student trainee so he is better qualified upon graduation to more nearly assume his professional responsibilities by utilizing:

1. The full facilities of the colleges and universities.
2. The In-Service Training Program that will give him both the broad concept of soil conservation and also specialized job knowledge.

Guides

To carry out the objective of this training plan, the following will serve as guides:

1. Develop regional plans: Such plans will be based on the needs for all grades and classes of work. State and regional training committee can assist in the development of these plans.
2. Develop individual plans: Individual plans will be based on student needs and program conditions within the region. This provides an opportunity to strengthen the supervisor-employee relationship.
3. Orientation training: All trainees, regardless of grade or designation, will be oriented into basic philosophy of soil conservation and the broad conservation objective. Policy and history of the Service will be included.
4. Job training: Job training will be provided to develop the conservation skills of the trainee.

Procedure

To carry out these objectives in line with these guides, the following factors should be taken into consideration and coordinated into the plan:

1. Training Plans

An individual training plan will be made for each trainee. This plan will include the subjects or jobs in which training is to

be given, standards expected, the sequence in which it is to be given, and who is to do the training. As phases of training are finished, appropriate notations will be made indicating progress. The plan then becomes, in effect, the record of training done. It will form one of the basis for future training plans.

a. Orientation: Since we are developing a well rounded conservationist, the trainee must thoroughly understand the following:

- (1) Philosophy of the soil/water conservation movement.
 - (2) Philosophy of soil conservation districts and their objectives.
 - (3) Service history, organization and policies.
 - (4) Broad basic functions and objectives of the Soil Conservation Service
 - (5) Service relationships within the Department of Agriculture, and in other governmental and private agencies.
 - (6) His own rights, privileges and responsibilities.
- This training is needed even though the trainee goes into a specialized line of work.

b. Job training: Student trainees will be trained, largely, by doing specific types of jobs. Variety of work should be provided so the trainee can gain as much experience and knowledge of Service work as possible. Emphasis in all job training should be placed on the trainee learning the various skills with actual production of secondary concern.

Counsel and guidance: A definite plan for counseling and guiding student trainees is needed to coordinate college and summer work. During the summer period the immediate supervisor should assume the position of principal counselor. However, the state conservationist (since he is the selecting officer) must keep in close contact with trainees. These contacts, if well developed, will greatly assist in guiding the formal development of our future employees.

All of our counseling work must be done in fairness and honesty to the student as well as to the Service.

2. Placernent

The placement of trainees for summer work is important. Administrators must have a long range plan for each individual. Basically the trainees can be divided into two categories, namely: Those employed for the first summer and those spending the second and third summer with the Soil Conservation Service. Placement for adequate follow-up development after graduation must also be considered.

There must be facilities for training, as well as the opportunity to do productive work. For a trainee to develop, he must have a feeling of usefulness. The local training supervisor is the key to the success or failure of the program. Training supervisors must be selected as a result of their demonstrated ability to develop people. The development of people should become a part of the training supervisor's standard of performance and he should be evaluated accordingly. Group placement of trainees may be advantageous and will need to be determined in the light of local conditions.

3. Reporting

Adequate records need to be kept on the student trainee activities so a clear and concise progress report can be made to the selecting officer. These reports need to cover personality and character traits, as well as information on the demonstrated ability of the trainee to do the conservation job.

The trainee should have full knowledge of his progress and the report should be discussed with him so he can be guided in the development of his career.

Robert M. Satter